



alaska judicial council

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Press Release

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Judicial Vacancy Announcements

Alaska Supreme Court and Anchorage Superior Courts

The Alaska Judicial Council is now receiving applications for a position on the Alaska Supreme Court and two positions on the Anchorage Superior Courts. The impending vacancy on the Alaska Supreme Court is due to the forthcoming retirement of Chief Justice Daniel E. Winfree. This is a justice position; the next chief justice will be selected by other members of the supreme court for a three-year term pursuant to Article IV, section 2, of the Alaska Constitution. The positions on the Anchorage Superior Court are due to the forthcoming retirements of Anchorage Superior Court Judges Eric A. Aarseth and Erin B. Marston.

Interested persons may obtain an application form by calling the Judicial Council office or online at the Council's website (www.ajc.state.ak.us). **The Judicial Council must have completed applications for these positions in its office by 3:00 p.m. on July 22, 2022.**

Alaska judges must conform their conduct to the Alaska Code of Judicial Conduct and the laws of Alaska and the United States. They must be familiar with Alaska law, procedure, and trial practice. A supreme court justice must meet the qualifications set out at AS 22.05.070. They must: be a citizen of the United States and of the State of Alaska; be a resident of Alaska for five years immediately preceding appointment; have engaged in the active practice of law, as defined in AS 22.05.070, for not less than eight years immediately preceding appointment; and must be licensed to practice law in Alaska at the time of appointment.

A superior court judge must meet the qualifications set out at AS 22.10.090. They must be a citizen of the United States and of the state of Alaska, be a resident of Alaska for five years immediately preceding appointment, have engaged in the active practice of law, as defined in AS 22.05.070, for not less than five years immediately preceding appointment, and at the time of appointment be licensed to practice law in Alaska.

Applications are reviewed by the Judicial Council, a seven member citizens' commission with three attorneys, three non-attorneys, and the chief justice of the Alaska Supreme Court, who serves as Chair, *ex officio*. Each applicant completes a detailed questionnaire covering all aspects of the applicant's personal and professional history. Applicants also submit a legal writing sample and references.

Following the application closing date, the Council conducts a comprehensive investigation of the applicants. The Council asks the public for comments; reviews criminal and credit records; examines any litigation involving the applicant; looks at bar and judicial disciplinary records; sends out requests for more detailed information to attorneys and judges in recent cases handled by the applicant; checks references supplied by the applicants; contacts all former employers; surveys Alaska Bar Association members about legal skills, integrity and other qualities; and does any other needed investigation.

Council members will meet in November 2022 to conduct public hearings and to interview the applicants for the vacancies.

At the end of the interviews, the Council deliberates in executive session. The Council then takes a public vote to nominate at least two of the most qualified applicants for each appointment. The Council votes on which applicants are the most qualified based upon consideration of the applicant's professional competence, diligence and administrative skills, integrity, fairness, temperament, judgment, legal and life experience, demonstrated commitment to public and community service, and demonstrated commitment to equal justice and the legal needs of the diverse communities of Alaska. The Council also considers the candidates who have applied, the position applied for, and the community in which the position is located. The governor then has 45 days in which to appoint judges from the Council's lists of nominees.

Persons interested in applying for these positions may obtain more information from the Judicial Council at 510 L Street, Suite 450, Anchorage, Alaska 99501-1295, (907) 279-2526.

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